











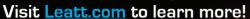






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BRITISH GRAND PRIX MATTERLEY BASIN - MAY 25th - Rnd 8 of 17

MXGP winner: Tony Cairoli, KTM MX2 winner: Jeffrey Herlings, KTM





SPECIAL

ONE

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by Ray Archer





Tony Cairoli marked his 68th Grand Prix victory at Matterley Basin. It was not one of his best, but it certainly was one of his most personally important. As many MXGP followers will be aware by now the Sicilian's world had crashed down over a week prior to this eighth round of seventeen and a series he led by 24 points coming into the UK rain. The sudden death of Benedetto Cairoli in Sicily robbed the 28 year old of his sole surviving parent after his mother passed away through illness in 2011.

Just ten months earlier the Red Bull KTM rider had destroyed one of his 350SX-F engines in elation at securing his seventh world title in the Matterley 'bowl'. This time his 1-2 performance in two sunny but breezy motos brought a relief and satisfaction of a different kind.

"I came from the worst two weeks that anybody can have," he said in the post-race press conference. "Losing somebody of the family...especially my father who is the one that put me on the bike and let me ride without any pressure. He was the best I could have and I spent a lot of time with him training. It is pretty tough to miss this part of your life...when you are not expecting it [to be gone]. I didn't train at all and didn't sleep for three or four days. I had to move on, and this week was better. This is one of my favourite tracks and it gets pretty rough, with the rain it was even better. It turned out to be a really good weekend..."

Somehow Rockstar Suzuki's Clement Desalle loosened his grip on this race. The Belgian won in 2013, had been dominantly victorious two weeks prior to this latest edition of the British GP (now shorn of the MXGP Festival tag) via a 1-1 in Spain and was uncatchable in the showery conditions on Saturday for Pole Position. Desalle is undoubtedly the form rider in MXGP at the moment. However a mistake entering the first uphill banked turn while in third place in the first moto led to head-plant for the Belgian and he had to compose himself to fight back to fourth; helmet peak shunted perpendicular, giving him the silhouette of a medieval knight for much of the duration. Cairoli defended the lead from a resurgent Monster Energy Kawasaki's Steven Frossard and the ever consistent-but-distant Jeremy Van Horebeek. Desalle resumed business in the second moto for his third chequered flag from the last four.











Cairoli dealt with Van Horebeek with exceptional bravery over the massive quad jump (on a 350 to boot but one heavy landing damaged his rear wheel and he had to concede the race to Desalle after a trying to close a six second gap) and again showed what a truly special talent the champion is in the most trying of circumstances and preparation for this event.

Desalle commented on his disappointment afterwards but also seemed content with second place when referencing some neck pain and acknowledging a narrow escape from more injury. The Suzuki man perhaps more than anybody else in the MXGP pack knows the importance of attrition in a title fight and it is a lesson that Van Horebeek is learning extremely quickly. Seven podiums in a row for the Yamaha rider is a total only matched by the defending champions Cairoli and Herlings across the classes. Knocking on the half way door of the season JVH knows this continued trail of results will lead to the gold at the end of the rainbow.

British interest at Matterley was buoyed by decent speed from CLS Monster Kawasaki's Tommy Searle, Hitachi Construction Machinery KTM UK's Shaun Simpson and Wilvo Forkrent KTM's Jake Nicholls. The first made a solid comeback from injury for fifth overall, the second was second in qualifying and fast around the flowing layout but lacked starts to trouble the top five while the last again posed a significant top ten threat in his rookie MXGP campaign.

While Frossard crashed on the first corner of the second moto and snapped his rear brake and Rockstar Suzuki's Kevin Strijbos was never happy with his form and feeling around the English mud, Red Bull IceOne Husqvarna's Tyla Rattray did enjoy his first return to the UK since 2008. The South African matched his determination with some effective starts and fourth overall was an indication that the former world champ still has something to contribute to this premier class.

MXGP was a division devoid of factory Hondas due to Evgeny Bobryshev's visa debacle that meant no HRC representation in the UK. The

Russian apparently went through the same process as on every other successful application and visit to Great Britain but had been misinformed and ultimately bogged down by bureaucracy and red tape. Talk of a political witch-hunt was unfounded, as Honda had tried every conceivable way to have their professional athlete present at an event officially sanctioned by an international sporting governing body only to be hit by a backlog of administration. The same circumstances had stopped Alex Tonkov from competing at Matterley in 2013.

One rider free to run abashed in Great Britain was Jeffrey Herlings, earning his seventh win of the year, fourth double on the trot (so eight motos in a row) and his first of a career tally of 38 (and still nineteen years old) on UK shores. The British crowd taunted the Dutchman two years previously after his title dispute with Tommy Searle involved a few ugly episodes but on this occasion they could only emanate respect as Herling was again an attacking force of strength, confidence and speed. If a percentage of success in racing is based on psychological state then the KTM rider needs to make the switch to MXGP very soon as his winning ways are likely to continue with the phase of boldness and belief '84' currently holds. He is getting near his superlative levels of 2013 and although CLS Monster Kawasaki's Arnaud Tonus was a deserved second place in England the distance in potential is still vast and in terms of numbers is growing further with the gap between the pair at the top of the standings flexing up to 39; almost a Grand Prix with nine remaining.

Tonus picked up his fifth trophy of the year but to Herlings' other side on the podium was Gariboldi Honda's Tim Gajser lifting his very first; HRC at least had something to take from Matterley. The Slovenian has been elevating himself to the fringes of the leading group in the past three or four rounds and although he was not the quickest starter in the Basin he showed the possibilities of the soft and multi-lined track by cutting through to a 4-3 scorecard.

On Monday morning the rain poured down again on Winchester. The weather had been poor on Friday and parts of the Saturday programme but the organisers and 25,000 crowd had been lucky on Sunday with mostly blue skies. As the MXGP infrastructure was quickly dismantled for the trip to France next week there was already talk of the rain having extended further south and St Jean D'Angely was already a wash. Some curious conditions and possibilities ahead for this busy mid-season stretch perhaps?







Not much happening in the RITAIN HRC team with Evgeny Bobryshev absent and Max Nagl also missing still through injury...meanwhile Tyla Rattray (below) is gaining pace and confidence on the Husky 350





Desalle bears the marks of the crash that cost him a second overall Grand Prix victory in a row (left). Romain Febvre could not grab his third podium of the year in MX2 (above) but must still be a decent shout for a works Husky ride for 2015 in MXGP. Searle (100) and Simpson (24) enacted a fight for the ranking of 'best brit' with Jake Nicholls also playing a part. Searle would win with fifth place but Simpson was not far behind...









MXGP BRITAIN

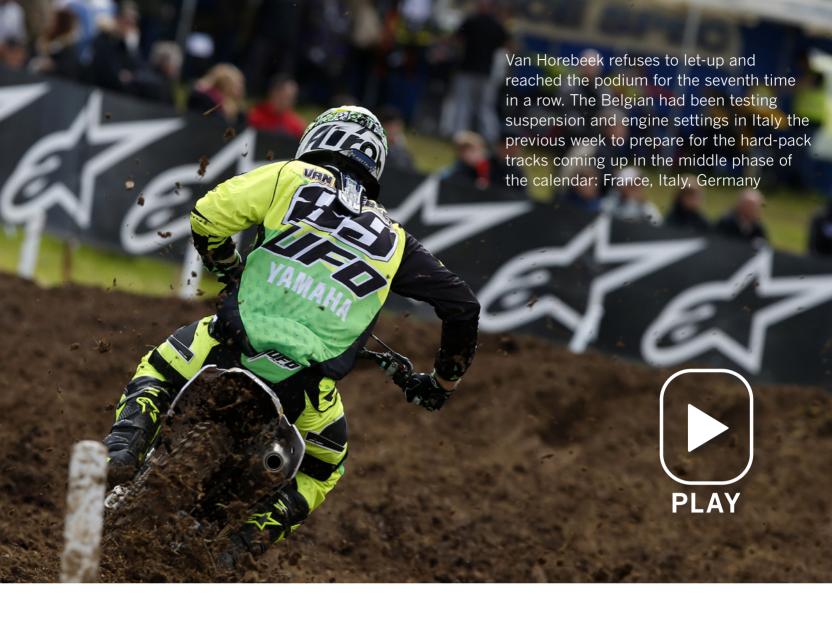












CLASSIFICATION & WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

MXGP OVERALL RESULT					
Riders					
1	Tony Cairoli, ITA	Suzuki			
2	Clement Desalle, BEL	Yamaha			
3	Jeremy Van Horebeek, BEL	Suzuki			
4	Tyla Rattray, RSA	Husqvarna			
5	Tommy Searle, GBR	Kawasaki			

MXGP WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
STANDINGS (AFTER 8 OF 17 ROUNDS)

Riders		Points
1	Tony Cairoli	351
2	Clement Desalle	323
3	Jeremy Van Horebeek	316
4	Kevin Strijbos	250
5	Gautier Paulin	205

MX2 OVERALL RESULT					
Riders					
1	Jeffrey Herlings, NED	KTM			
2	Arnaud Tonus, SUI	Kawasaki			
3	Tim Gajser, SLO	Honda			
4	Jordi Tixier, FRA	KTM			
5	Romain Febvre, FRA	Husqvarna			

MX2 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 8 OF 17 ROUNDS)

Riders		Points
1	Jeffrey Herlings	344
2	Arnaud Tonus	305
3	Romain Febvre	263
4	Jordi Tixier	253
5	Dylan Ferrandis	248









SUN WORSHIPPERS...

By Adam Wheeler

cometimes among the excitement of watch-Jing good racing, hanging out with your mates over the weekend at the track, seeing the stars of the sport and generally having a pleasant vibe of a decent day out it can be hard to remember who really 'wins' from creating a Grand Prix. Think about it. Youthstream feel pressure to stage the events at a certain standard in order to show progression and to entice more interest (financially and numerically in several senses: fans, viewers, followers). This means more infrastructure, more TV investment and more personnel. The cause-and-effect hits the local promoter, who then juggles a very difficult balancing act with set-up costs and ticket prices...in turn affecting the spectators; the very quantity of which is one element the whole modern shape of the sport is trying to increase.

The magic formula to ensure everybody comes out of a Grand Prix with a high degree of satisfaction is a mysterious and complicated elixir and the spell perhaps only strikes a few times a year. Even experienced and established clubs might fancy their chances of running a memorable race, complying with Youthstream's expectations and making money to boot but then something as unreliable as the weather can throw months and months of hard work and investment into the sluice with the rain.

Everybody is looking for sponsors. Teams, clubs, organisers and (now even more so) riders. In the niche world of MX the pool of industry players is hardly wide or bottomless and it can mean an endless cycle of tense pitches and rejections. The injection of government cash for twisting a Grand Prix into a national or regional promotional tool has been a sought-after methodology for a number of years now but even this 'well' has shown signs of dryness in several zones of Europe. Spain was able to return to the FIM Motocross World Championship calendar after three years thanks to backing from the town of Talavera de la Reina in a bold political move on the eve of local elections. From sampling the weather and atmosphere two weeks ago it seems to have paid-off in the feel good factor but the Spanish organising committee were known to have been hoping for an attendance higher than the official figure of 15,000 for the weekend. Can Talavera be on the 2015 slate without the same level of support? Despite positive noises from the current Mayor about the future of the Spanish GP at the old venue it is hard to see the GPs going back there unless the local council puts-up.

Some Grand Prix would seem like bankers. Youthstream President Giuseppe Luongo has already described the Qatari round as something



like the ideal model. The French visit depends on a sizeable and reliable fanbase at either Ernee or St Jean. Germany and Italy have also grown and involve capable circuits.

"The magic formula for a successful GP for all concerned is a complicated elixir..."

At one stage the estimated cost of sanctioning rights for a GP stood at 300,000 euros with one organiser calculating that a similar quantity is needed for actually staging the fixture. I have no idea of the landscape now (will have to do some digging) but it must be almost impossible to clear that and come out 'in the black' without other companies helping to make it all happen. Government assistance might be easier to come by in some territories compared to others and eases the pressure somewhat but the necessity of sponsorship to ensure sustainability is almost paramount.

The British Grand Prix is something of an extreme example of a meeting without many parties attached to the budget sheet but the potential to be one of the most raucous and

best-attended of the year. For the life of me I cannot understand why the race was switched from a mid-August slot to the end of May (perhaps to let the original far-flung Ukraine date have prominence in the heart of summer). The UK weather can be brutal and the unforgiving clouds bookended what was a very decent occurrence at Matterley last weekend. GP honcho since 2011, Steve Dixon insists the GP is now starting to build and attract a small portfolio of people keen to get involved and for this reason the sunshine on Saturday was an absolute god-send.

For the sake of the sport and people who have their money tied up in a Grand Prix it can be a terse balancing act if survival depends on the colour of the sky. Interestingly two of the wettest GPs of recent memory – Bellpuig in Spain in 2008 and Faenza, Italy in 2009 – are now no longer part of the FIM MXGP landscape...











HILLY HILLS

The first of a new MXGP series in OTOR sees us questioning some Grand Prix riders on topics or issues floating around the paddock. We decided to chat to racers Jake Nicholls and Shaun Simpson, the two principal rivals for this year's British Championship and two advocates of neck protection with Atlas and Leatt respectively, to gather their thoughts on the products, their function and practicality...

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by Ray Archer





OK, first up, why and how did you start with neck protection?

Nicholls: "I went with the craze in 2007 when they started coming out. I wore it for that whole season. At the start of 2008 I had a really bad crash and came down on my head and shoulders. I broke three ribs, punctured a lung and broke my collarbone and shoulder in an area where the brace was so I was unsure after that. I didn't wear it for another two and a half seasons but then I was standing in the exact place where Steve Ramon [2007 MX1 World Champion] had his crash at Lommel in 2011 and it 'did me in' [Ramon crashed in the sand and was temporarily paralysed, the accident ended his career]. I could not believe what I had just seen. At the time I was living locally at Ann Geboers' place [Suzuki Team co-ordinator] she told me that night that he was going to be OK but the doctor said if he hadn't been wearing the neck brace then he'd be in a lot worse condition. From the moment I asked Glen Dempsey [renowned rider manager] to speak to Leatt and I went for a measurement the next day. I haven't stopped since."

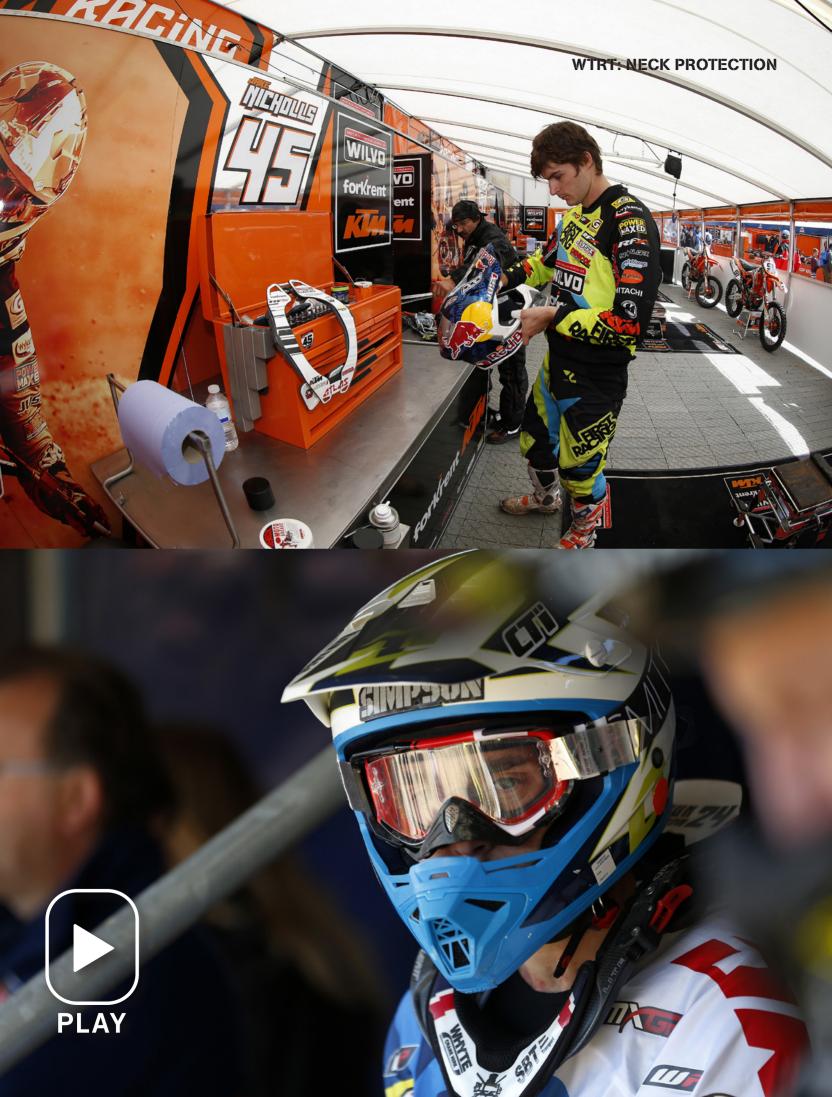
Simpson: "It was back in early 2007. One of the first people I saw riding with one was Tom Church [former GP racer and British Championship race winner]. Roger Magee, the team owner I was riding for at the time and again for now, turned up at the Spanish Grand Prix with a Leatt brace; a GPX that was half carbon, half composite I think. He asked if I wanted to try it. Being naïve and young I thought 'neck brace; great!' and just threw it on over my old chest protector. It didn't fit at all, felt too high and was cumbersome: I hated it! At the next GP the guy from Leatt came over and mentioned that he'd seen me running the brace in Spain and I told him I wasn't wearing it again and didn't like it. He asked why, and it turned out I had all the wrong settings and fitting measurements. From that moment...well, I have always said to people that whenever I wear a neck brace I don't know I have it on. I don't feel it."

What about all the myths of it causing other injuries? Were you concerned?

Simpson: "People have their theories about collarbones, their back and the single strut but Leatt have shown over and over that the strut is well designed and breaks away under pressure. It will snap at a certain threshold to give you maximum protection. I get people asking me "why?" all the time. I don't understand the collarbone argument. I feel that my collarbones have enough space and I actually have metal plates on them so I would certainly feel if there was any pressure or rubbing!"

Nicholls: "That night in Belgium after seeing the Ramon crash I thought a lot and re-analysed my accident from 2008 and I did land on my head. The 'small picture' was that I broke bones...but I was riding again in three months. If I didn't have the brace then I could have added a potentially worse neck injury to that list. I was quite short sighted at the time and I had a re-think and believed that the brace did me a favour."

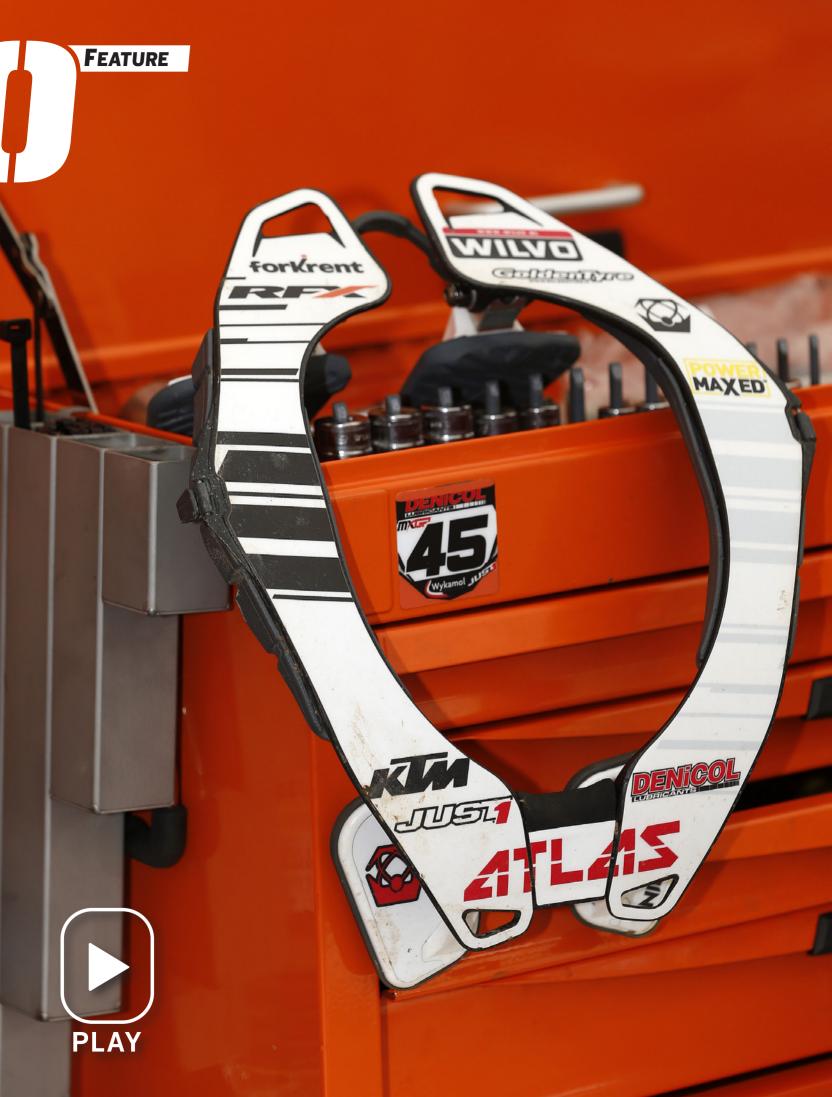
Simpson: "A few weeks ago at a Belgian International I had a crash and I injured my thumb. I woke up the next morning and had the feeling that I also had whiplash. I knew I had rattled my head hard and I had bruising at the top of my forehead where I took the impact from the crash. The helmet was broken, peak smashed up. I didn't really think of the job that my neck brace did until I looked at it a week later and three of the sections were either broken or bent. When I took it for servicing the guy said 'wow, this has done a decent job of saving you in some way'. It is one of those bits of equipment where you will never know how well it works...until you don't use one and end up in hospital."







Simpson: "If you are protected with your boots, knee braces, chest and back protector, helmet and the neck brace then you have done all that you can..."



Have you found or do you feel that there are any limitations?

Nicholls: "Not really. Ben Townley [ex world motocross and AMA supercross champion] was always saying to me that I ride a bit too stiff and that I should try and relax and be more fluid. He suggested going without the brace but I said "I'd rather not..." He was fine about that and he started wearing one when I was in New Zealand with him last time. Ben has always ridden quite shrugged and has one of the nicest styles in the world but he has never been able to get on with one."

Simpson: "Weight is not an issue and I don't feel that it restricts me. The only time I've ever had some difficulty is through the sand. Depending on the way the light comes through the trees – and if you are trying to keep your head down – you notice it more."

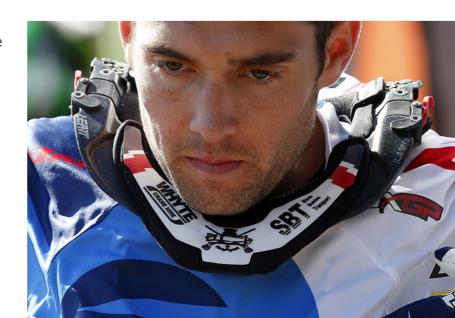
So how and why did you end up with Leatt or Atlas?

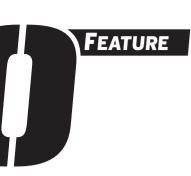
Simpson: "I always used Leatt and then tried Alpinestars. Everybody knows that in motocross you have to veer more towards the supplier that helps you out. Alpinestars have been really loyal to me - as have Leatt - and I left on good terms. I wore Alpinestars for three years and just felt that the brace had stayed the same and wasn't recently evolving whereas Leatt had made something even lighter, with the same protection but more movement. I switched back to the Leatt because it was lighter and better and I liked the fact they were trying for improvements all the time, a bit like Alpinestars do with their boots. As a racer, whether it is suspension, tyres or exhaust you always want better and something that is the latest."

Nicholls: "I saw Ryan Villopoto wearing the Atlas brace and I contacted the company because I liked the look of the product and how flexible it was. I was happy with the Leatt but the added flexibility and different design of the Atlas was the appeal. I get a lot of comments, more than you would believe, from people asking me if I actually wear a neck brace and that's ideal. To be honest with you I like the look of a rider if he wears the bare minimum on the bike, and that's OK for playing around in the dunes but when you're racing and you are risking so much I'm willing not to look so cool!"

Simpson: "I got asked about the chest straps. They were a sign that the brace was quite heavy. The Leatt was and is lighter and there is less mass to jangle about. The straps were not a ball-ache but I tended to find that I lost them all the time! It was a great design by Alpinestars to hold it in place. The Leatt now has a design with extra padding and it means more cleaning time compared to past versions where you just jet-washed the carbon or plastic. It is an area where I have commented to Leatt that for the average Joe90 it is a bit tricky, but perfection is key and two more minutes cleaning is no hassle."

Nicholls: "Atlas feels like they are a little family business from Canada and the connection is very personal. Which I really like."





Are you bothered about blinging the braces?

Nicholls: "I'll probably only speak to Atlas three or four times a year. They ask what sponsors I want and send me over a design. It's really nice. I haven't had one clothing company complain either that it is covering up gear. It is subtle and does what it is designed to do."

Simpson: "I've got ideas coming out of my ears all the time about 'this looking cool, that looking cool' but it seems to be hard work in getting somebody to make those ideas happen! If anything it is another visible place where you can place some personal sponsors and sell the space; maybe not as good as the helmet but still a useable area. I do think that a standard brace of any sort is not as nice as a blinged-up one that syncs with your gear."

Aside from the endorsement incentive are you continually motivated to wear one?

Simpson: "I've always believed that if you cannot feel the presence of any kit then protect yourself! Some people have commented to me "it's an extra thing to clean" but that's just a poor excuse. The neck brace is part of my kit that I value just as much as any other item. For racers it should not be about money and it's weird to see some top guys stop wearing them."

Nicholls: "I understand people's opinions and I would not argue against. Even now I would not tell people they were wrong not to wear one because it is very much a personal preference. Some people ride very shrugged, almost like they have no neck, so that is a factor."

Simpson: "Leatt look for advice all the time but I'm not sure how they can really improve... and a company that is so driven to protect the rider and also constantly advance their product is something you want to be part of."

Nicholls: "I don't think they should make a rule about it. A helmet is of course a different story."

Simpson: "My Dad has always told me that protection costs nothing and is just about being sensible. I always run hand guards on the bike. There might be one stone on the track that flicks up and breaks your finger and then you are missing a race or two and ruining part of the season. Protection is a massive thing and the good old saying 'you gotta be in it to win it' is never truer."









American motocross season started back up this past weekend with its own demanding 12 races in 15 weekend campaign. Supercross is the glitz and glamour of the sport, the 'bright lights' series that is somewhat removed from reality. But now this indoor discipline gets replaced by the shock-to-the-senses 'outdoors' where the riders have to face the elements, the 30-minute plus 2 lap motos and where the stress put on the motorcycle is infinitely harder than it is in supercross.

Outdoor motocross is indeed something to behold. The man standing there with the number one plate after 24 motos is truly a hero as each meeting is filled with great rides, heartbreaks and displays of grit rarely seen indoors. And with that, let's get talking about what we saw at the opener...

-The American outdoor series came back to Glen Helen for the first time since 2009 and it was a success in almost every way (although we see the getting into and out of the track still needs some work). MX Sports and Glen Helen couldn't come to an agreement on terms after that '09 race and both went elsewhere. MX Sports tried a couple of inferior tracks in Southern California and Glen Helen held a couple of Grand Prix's where pretty much nobody showed up. Let's face it, both parties needed each other and with the help of some key industry people the two parents made up and got back together. With the hills, the fifthgear start, the banked first turn, Glen Helen has everything you need for a national and the crowd count was impressive also.

-In the 450MX class were a couple of impressive rides by Red Bull KTM team-mates Ryan Dungey and Kenny Roczen. Dungey won the overall with a nice aggressive pass on Roczen with two turns left to go 3-1 for the win to Roczen's 2-2. Both riders seemed to be on another level through both motos.

JGR Yamaha's Josh Grant won the first sprint in a great ride (more on him later) but the KTM guys were 30 seconds ahead of third in the second moto and over a minute ahead of fourth in the first moto (Grant was out front). I'm not sure what was more depressing or impressive: the lack of speed by the competition (depressing) or the speed from the KTMs (impressive). Either way, Roczen and Dungey showed that they were in shape, their bikes were on point and it's hard to say if either rider needs to improve on anything.

-Coming into the series most pundits (ahem) had Yoshimura Suzuki's James Stewart as being Dungey's main challenger for this outdoor title but at Glen Helen the number 7 seemed to be well off the pace. A 6-6 day with a crash or two thrown in wasn't that bad but it was the lack of the 'Stewie speed' that should have his fans worried. Stewart didn't get the starts, didn't qualify outstandingly well (nothing wrong with his fourth overall but it wasn't what we're used to seeing) and didn't even come close to seeing the leaders on this day. He collided with Trey Canard in the first moto in a strange incident where one rider zigged and the other zagged. Stewart's got some work to do for round two if he's to fulfill what we all thought we'd see from him.

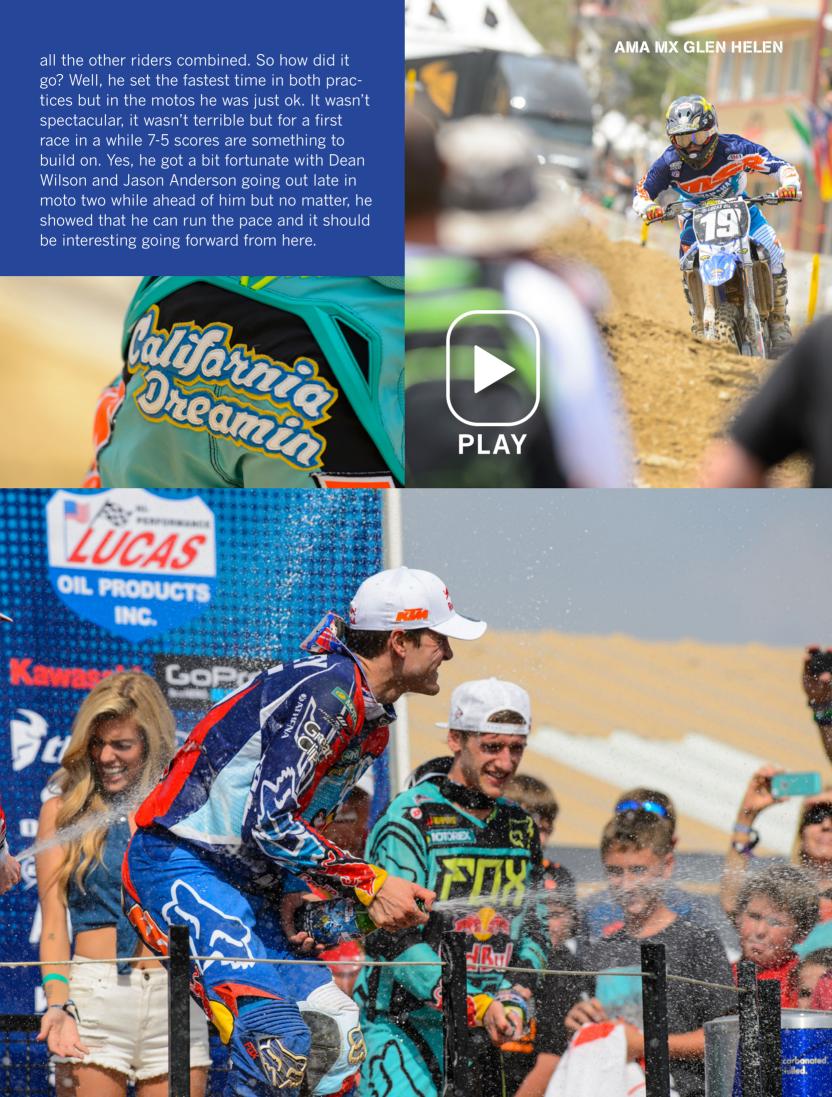
-Honda Muscle Milk team-mates Trey Canard and Justin Barcia both ran solidly inside the top five all day but Barcia was the victim of a weird DNF. In moto one, while holding steady in fourth place Barcia's chain broke just three turns from the end of lap seven. Not twenty seconds later, 11th place Andrew Short of the BTOSports KTM team came by and his chain broke less than ten feet away from Barcia's on the same lap. In basically the same spot. Bad deal for Barcia and as we said Canard ended up crashing with Stewart in moto one. Despite all these setbacks, the red riders had a good day with top five speed.

-Grant used his speed and track knowledge at Glen Helen to come away with his first moto win in four years. Grant's always been fast and has talent but injuries and inconsistency has held him back from being more than a one-race wonder here and there. Last season we saw Grant lead most of the moto at the last national of the year at Lake Elsinore and then was too exhausted to make moto two. This year he was better as he held off Roczen's last lap charge to win the first moto and he came back from a crash and an off-track excursion to salvage a 15th in the second one. It was a good thing for Grant (in a contract year) and for JGR to (kinda) back up that first moto with a good effort in the second but the real test for Grant will be to find some consistency throughout the other 22 motos.

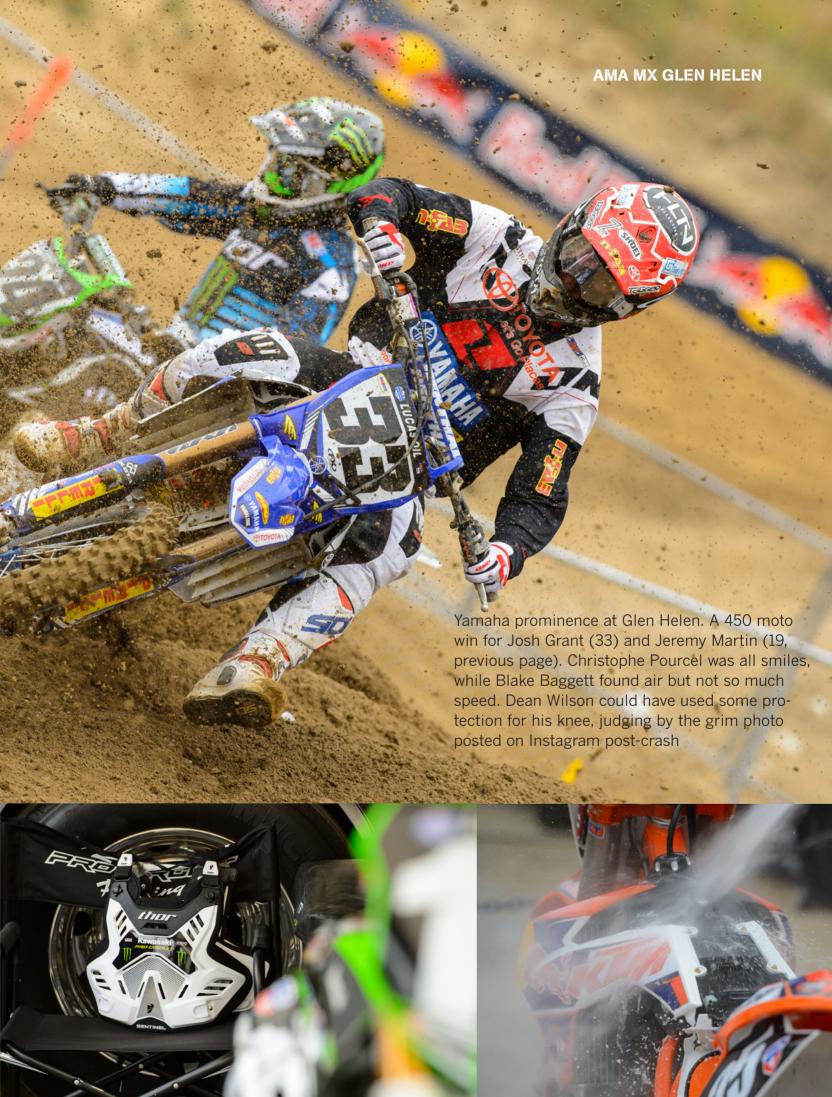
-In the 250MX class is was Star Yamaha's Jeremy Martin who broke through for an impressive first ever national win. This comes on the heels of Martin's first-ever supercross win two weeks ago in Las Vegas. His other supercross finishes weren't anything special but Martin showed at Glen Helen that he could really be coming-on and showing what he can do. I've got more on Martin and his team-mate Cooper Webb in the blog but let's just say it was impressive.

-The two powerhouse teams in the 250MX class had tough days at the opener. The Pro Circuit team look like it's lost Dean Wilson for a while after a nasty crash coming down a hill, Blake Baggett was just OK and Justin Hill well off the pace. And let's not forget the PC guys have Adam Cianciarulo, Darryn Durham and Martin Davalos all on the sidelines. GEICO Honda team had a rough day with Zach Osborne DNF-ing moto two after a crash, Justin Bogle falling on the first lap of moto two while in second and Zach Bell and Matt Bisceglia still learning the ropes. Should be interesting to see if these two motocross title 'factories' can rebound through the rest of the series.

-Look who's back again. Christophe Pourcel is making another comeback to racing and this time he's chosen the American 250MX class as his path. Once oh-so-close to being a two-time 250MX champion with the Pro Circuit team, Pourcel's made some curious career decisions since then and really only has one full racing season since 2010. Pourcel is back with Valli Yamaha and managed by Erik Kehoe (ex-factory rider and factory Honda manager) and there were as many questions about CP than almost

















AMA MX PRO MOTOCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP

450MX RESULT				
Riders				
1	Ryan Dungey, USA	KTM		
2	Ken Roczen, GER	KTM		
3	Trey Canard, USA	Honda		
4	Brett Metcalfe, AUS	Kawasaki		
5	Josh Grant, USA	Yamaha		

250MX RESULT				
Riders				
1	Jeremy Martin, USA	Yamaha		
2	Cooper Webb, USA	Yamaha		
3	Cole Seely, USA	Honda		
4	Blake Baggett, USA	Kawasaki		
5	Christophe Pourcel, FRA	Yamaha		

450MX STANDINGS (AFTER 1 OF 12 ROUNDS)				
G	iders	Points		
1	Ryan Dungey	45		
2	Ken Roczen	44		
3	Trey Canard	34		
4	Brett Metcalfe	34		
5	Josh Grant	31		

250MX STANDINGS (AFTER 1 OF 12 ROUNDS)				
Ri	iders	Points		
1	Jeremy Martin	50		
2	Cooper Webb	44		
3	Cole Seely	36		
4	Blake Baggett	33		
5	Christophe Pourcel	30		





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Robert Reisigner, co-founder, Director of Engineering



"I honestly believe it saved my life twice that night in Dallas." - Zach Bell / Team Gelco Honda

- Lavarage

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There were certainly a lot of storylines from the opening round of the Lucas Oil Pro Motocross championship but there was one that most definitely caught my eye in the 250MX class.

Out front, having the kind of day that any motocrosser - pro or amateur - dreams about was Star Racing's Jeremy Martin. Martin grabbed two out of the three holeshots on the day (there was a second moto re-start when Martin's teammate Anthony Rodriguez crashed hard) and in the other race he passed for the lead early on. Martin was simply untouchable as he went 1-1 for his first ever national win and with margins of over ten seconds in each moto, there was no doubt of who the best 250MX rider at Glen Helen.

In second place was Martin's team-mate Cooper Webb but he didn't have it as easy as Martin. In the first moto the second-year Pro came from thirteenth to second in a great ride. Second moto he didn't have to work as hard in coming from fifth after lap one to second again. Great day for the Star Yamaha guys and Yamaha themselves who won their first 250MX national since 2004 when Mike Brown claimed the overall at RedBud on a Yamaha of Troy. And no, that is not a misprint.

And in third place was Troy Lee Designs Honda's Cole Seely who had a bit of fortune in Rockstar KTM's Jason Anderson's bike blowing up late in moto two when he had the last spot on the podium wrapped. But still, Seely rode great and much improved over his past motocross performances.

But the interesting part of the race for me was in the first moto and behind the racers we mentioned above; Monster Kawasaki's Pro Circuit's Dean Wilson and Blake Baggett were in WWIII with Valli Yamaha's Christophe Pourcel. These three are all title favorites but on this day they couldn't really get it going.

Think about this. The trio have two national titles (Bagget and Wilson with Pourcel losing two heart-breaking title runs) and 22 national wins between them. The only other rider out of the forty racing in the 250MX class that had any sort of victory was Marvin Musquin, with three. Twenty-two wins to three and yet the guys with the zero wiped the floor with the 'vets'. The kids made a statement at the opening round, no doubt about it.

And it wasn't like the vets didn't have chances. Baggett ran second in the second moto for a long time until the kid Webb caught and passed him. Wilson ended up fifth in the first moto and then crashed hard coming down a hill in the second one. The star-crossed Wilson now looks like he'll be out for a while with a bad cut on his leg. And Pourcel, well the Frenchman's return to racing after a year off was solid but nothing spectacular. Nothing there to think that he could flip a switch and start winning anytime soon. Baggett in particular must be wondering what's going on. This was a track that he knows well, and he's also known for late race charges but Webb simply ground him down and pulled away by more than five seconds at the end.

No Pro Circuit riders on the podium, no GEICO Honda riders on the podium and some unexpected results. One race does not make a trend, it's too much of a small sample size, but consider this a shot across the bow by the youngsters and we'll see from here if the old-hands (minus Wilson with the injury) can respond. I'm not going to say they can't but as of right now, youth has gone wild in the 250's.

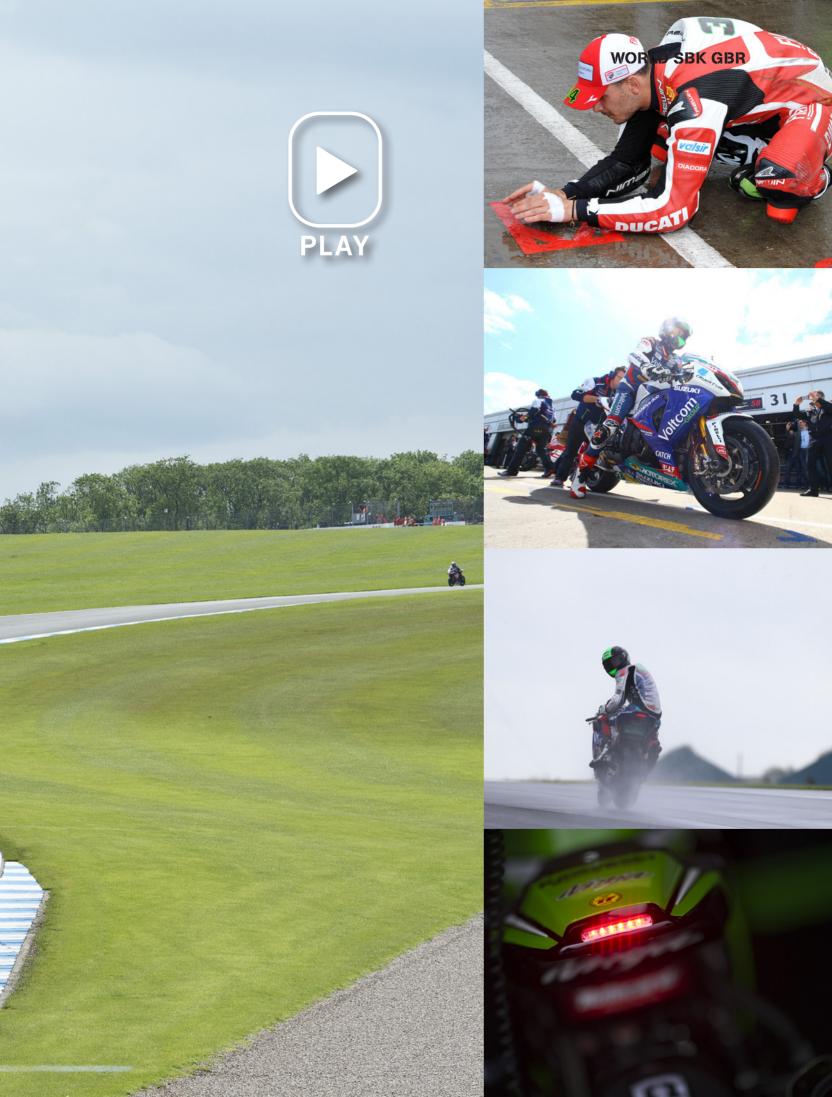




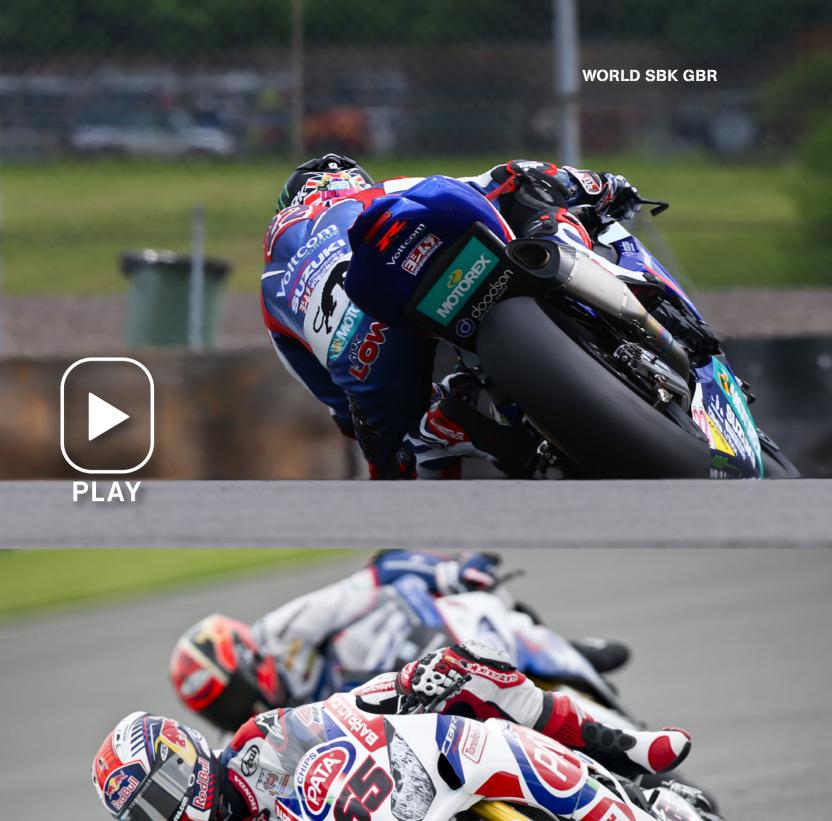






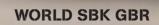






















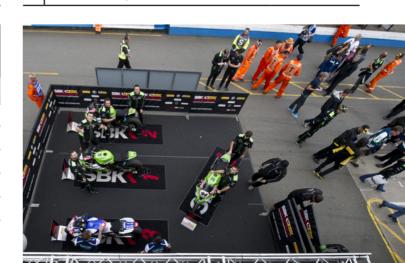
SBK CLASSIFICATION & CHAMPIONSHIP

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Riders			
1	Tom Sykes, GBR	Kawasaki	
2	Loris Baz, FRA	Kawasaki	
3	Alex Lowes, GBR	Suzuki	
4	Marco Melandri, ITA	Aprilia	
5	Chaz Davies GBR	Ducati	

SBK RACE ONE RESULT

SBK CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (5 of 14 rounds) Riders				
1	Tom Sykes, GBR	185		
2	Jonathan Rea, GBR	159		
3	Loriz Baz, FRA	159		
4	Sylvain Guintoli, FRA	148		
5	Chaz Davies, GBR	109		

3DR RACE I WO RESULI				
Riders				
1	Tom Sykes, GBR	Kawasaki		
2	Loris Baz, FRA	Kawasaki		
3	Sylvain Guintoli, FRA	Aprilia		
4	David Giugliano, ITA	Ducati		
5	Chaz Davies, GBR	Ducati		





ADVIERI

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BOWING TO THE BOX...

By Graeme Brown

As a Brit, you are asked a dozen times a day what the weather will do when you have a race in the UK. Donington Park was no exception and I was at a loss when it came to the forecast. On Friday morning I checked a couple of sites on the internet, watched the BBC main forecast along with the BBC regional one. Guess what? They were all different. As always I have learned to just accept what comes. Take the waterproofs out on track with me and hope for the best.

The weather isn't the only thing that is proving unpredictable in World Superbikes at the moment.

Every round seems to bring a new running order to the weekends activities. In Laguna Seca last year Dorna experimented with having a race on Saturday and another on Sunday. The idea was that because of the time difference it is always difficult to meet press deadlines in Europe for an event on the west coast of the US. So a Saturday race meant the media in Europe could give some column inches over to the meeting.

This season so far we have seen a few different schedules for each weekend. Aragon, Assen and Imola had WSBK races start at 10:30 and 13:10 instead of the long-standing times of 12:00 and 15:30. At Donington everything changed again however with 3 timed sessions on Friday, instead of 2, Superpole at 12:00 on Saturday instead of 15:00 and races at 12:00 and 15:00 on Sunday. In Sepang in 2 weeks time it has been suggested that the schedule will alter once more.

Now when you get to my age you like a bit of routine. So have these changes been made to keep the ageing press core on their toes? Of course not. It all comes down to TV.

With the European season in all forms of world motorsport well underway and to avoid clashing with MotoGP, the WSBK championships falls on the same weekend as Formula 1. In an attempt to increase the TV viewing figures the race schedules are being juggled to fit in with F1 viewing times. Apparently it is working. The Italian media were given a press release after Assen, which I have yet to see, that showed a marked increase in TV viewers in Italy and Spain for the Aragon and Assen races. Indeed the Assen race apparently had the highest live viewing figures in Italy ever for a WSBK race.

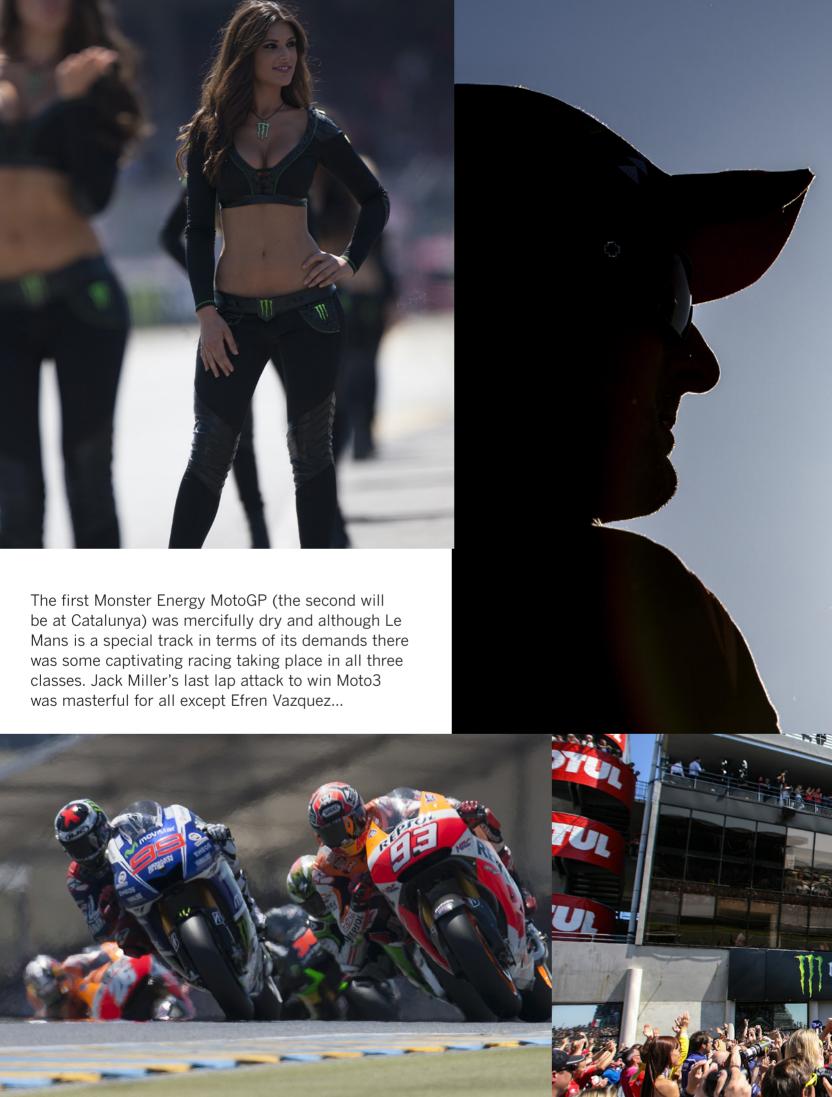
The problem, however, is that the race schedule is not published until a week before the event and - I suspect - in collaboration with the host broadcasters in Italy and Spain. It has been a self-defeating plan for other broadcasters though. In Aragon I was with the Eurosport UK guys when they took a call from their colleagues in France who were in a panic as to why the schedule had been switched. I am not sure whether or not they missed a live slot in France but surely a predictable event programme allows all broadcasters to plan their own itineraries in advance. I am sure Eurosport had some tennis to show anyway. Hopefully the plan will work and we will see more bike racing on mainstream channels and get the public enthused to come to the races.

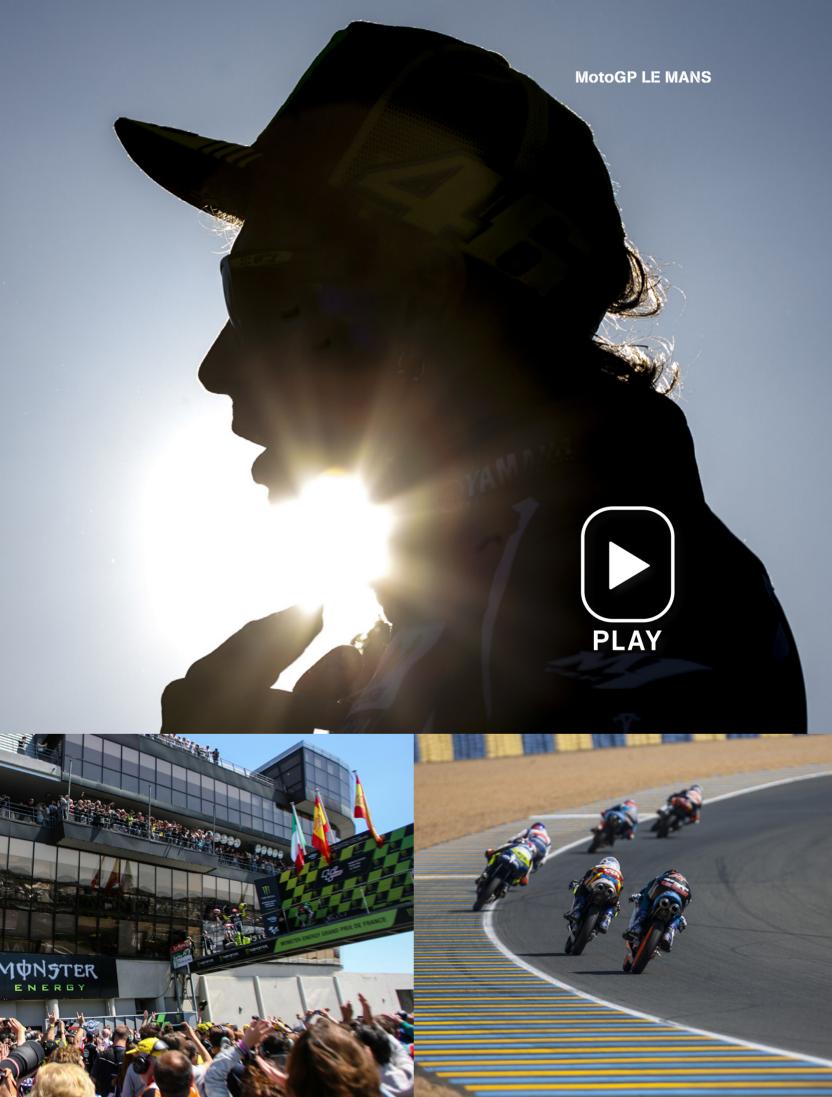




VE IN A ROW FOR MARQUEZ AND TAGS OF 'PREDICTABILITY' OR 'DISINTEREST' COULD HAVE STARTED TO SURFACE IN FRANCE IF THE CHAMPION HAD NOT EARNED HIS LATEST VICTORY WITH SUCH BRILLIANCE...

Photos Martin Heath www.martinheathphoto.com



















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PREDICTING ITALY...?

By Gavin Emmett

With five Marquez wins out of five so far this season, it may look like MotoGP is in one of those eras of dominance that just make you want to switch off the TV and do something less boring instead.

It is becoming increasingly hard to imagine anything other than a victory for the Repsol Honda rider every weekend, and it seems only a mistake would deny him a clean sweep this year; as the race in Le Mans showed last time out even running off track doesn't prevent him from winning.

After having put it on the outside of the famous Garage Vert double-right early on the young Spaniard's compelling surge through from tenth place to victory in France showed that there is more to his dominance than the kind of solo victories that would have seen Mick Doohan or Casey Stoner romp to glory in their heyday.

Marquez has the panache to excite the crowd in the way Rossi would in the early part of the millennium, and the personality off the track to satisfy the media hunger for a character to sell their magazines.

So while it is hard to believe this weekend's race at Mugello could provide the perfect opportunity to derail the Marquez express train, the Tuscan track provides enough to suggest we are at least in for another unmissable weekend of action.

The biggest challenge to the #93 juggernaut has come so far from Italy's own big-hitter himself, and remarkably the Mugello event will mark Valentino Rossi's 300th race in grands prix. There is a lot of talk that after a resurgence in form this year the 35 year-old may well take the landmark moment as a prompt to announce a new two-year deal with Yamaha.

It's not without merit, after he showed in Le Mans that he has the pace to run at the front once more - but for a mistake he could have made it that bit harder for Marquez to win. Whether he is able to beat the youngster or not yet is another matter, but let's not forget that he won seven Italian GPs in a row at Mugello between 2002 and 2008.

Similarly, Jorge Lorenzo has a remarkable record on Italian soil, with nobody else defeating the Spaniard there over the past three years. The Mallorcan has won the last six races between Mugello and Misano, so goes into the race with a pedigree that suggests he should be 'in with a shout again.

Sadly his campaign has still not ignited and he is in a funk compounded by tyre issues and pre-season fitness woes. Contract negotiations with Yamaha are on hold while he finds his feet, so a proposed 20 million offer from Ducati may pique his interest even more should he fail to rediscover the real Lorenzo this weekend. We need it, not to keep the show alive, but to elevate Marquez's exceptional achievements to another degree of difficulty.

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ATLAS

Atlas have a decent solution for kids and small firsttime riders with their 'Tyke' brace. They claim that this is no re-sized version derived from the adult model and is created specifically for juniors. Among the features of the design Atlas claim the Tyke has: a) A specifically re-engineered entry system also doubles as the Emergency Removal System, and can be completed in 3 seconds with a simple push of a button, with no loose parts that fall away. b) Custom built lightweight back supports feature a break/fold away design just like the Carbon brace, but smaller. c) Reversible rear washer system allows the back supports to have 2 adjustment positions to fine tune sizing. d) Newly designed back support mounts allow a smooth, controlled folding action while the tether stays tucked up and out of the way. e) Simplistic, flexible, open frame design makes the Atlas family the only high-end non-rigid, most comfortable braces on the market.

Unlike the Leatt we've yet to get our hands on a Tyke to see how it can measure up but the consideration that Atlas have made towards this youth product means they are deadly serious in capturing attention and playing a significant role for the next generation of rider.

Well worth checking out: www.atlasbrace.com















PRODUCTS







TRIUMPH

Another decent Alpinestars link-up with a quality brand and the latest line of Triumph/AS boots have been launched (available in or via any Triumph dealer). The Tour Adventure and Urbane have very different roles and have construction, material and styling for the varying uses while the T3-GTX are a bit bland but could be suitable for a commute or one of Triumphs more conservative models compared to say the Daytona or Scrambler.

The Urbane in particular has premium, full grain leather upper, reinforced ankle protection, a water-proof and breathable outer membrane, heel and toe protection and an anti-slip rubber outsole. It is priced at 139 pounds.

As usual for more info: www.triumphmotorcycles. com.uk



ALPINESTARS

Here are some of the new products to come from the Alpinestars and Monster Energy collaboration that already began with several pieces this time last year. Alpinestars claim: 'The new Alpinestars Monster Energy® Collection features a range of products for men and women which incorporate premium materials, class-leading protection and advanced construction technologies to offer outstanding performance and protection on the road or track.' There are seven variations of jacket (for men and women) and a similar number of gloves. We like the Drakonis for street riding while the Cloak Tech Fleece is a good casual option. Also shown here is the Xelos two piece suit.

For more info and products: http://s1963.alpinestars.com/m-05m15d14y

















'On-track Off-road' is a free, bi-weekly publication for the screen focussed on bringing the latest perspectives on events, blogs and some of the very finest photography from the three worlds of the FIM Motocross World Championship, the AMA Motocross and Supercross series' and MotoGP. 'On-track Off-road' will be published online at **www.ontrackoffroad.com** every other Tuesday. To receive an email notification that a new issue available with a brief description of each edition's contents simply enter an address in the box provided on the homepage. All email addresses will be kept strictly confidential and only used for purposes connected with OTOR.

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